

# PRESENT TENSE

the newsletter for public affairs officers

DECEMBER 2002



**CIVIL AIR PATROL**  
MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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*Present Tense* is the official monthly publication for public affairs officers of the Civil Air Patrol, and is produced by Melanie LeMay in the Public Relations & Marketing Directorate, CAP National Headquarters, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

Is there something you'd like us to cover in *Present Tense*? Contact Melanie LeMay at [mlemay@capnhq.gov](mailto:mlemay@capnhq.gov) or call her at (334) 953-5320.

What it takes to

## Make it to the top



Photo by Melanie LeMay / CAP National Headquarters

### National PAO of the Year

Lt. Col. Jayson Altieri, CAP, left, enjoys congratulations from CAP's two top commanders, Maj. Gen. Richard Bowling, center, and Brig. Gen. Dwight Wheless, at CAP's annual conference in Philadelphia, Aug. 23, 2002.

## Earning points as a PAO

**Melanie LeMay**  
*Public Relations Specialist*

"Tenacity and a willingness to tell a good story." Jayson Altieri says those are the traits of a successful PAO. Altieri should know. He was the CAP member chosen to receive the Col. Robert V. "Bud" Payton Award at this year's annual conference as CAP's national PAO of the year.

Altieri has served in the U.S. Army since 1984, but he joined CAP even earlier, in 1979, as a cadet in Virginia's Roanoke Composite Squadron.

Although Altieri has served CAP in many capacities, he is particularly interested in public affairs. "The story of what CAP is doing is one that needs to be told," he said.

However, telling that story

sometimes requires pushing fellow CAP members as much or more than the media, he has found. "A staff officer's job is to support the commander and not take 'no' for an answer," he said. "You have to push."

"Many staff officers are afraid to stand up and be counted," Altieri said. "That causes CAP commanders and AF liaison officers to be leery of showing CAP to the media. However, failing to show CAP to the media negatively impacts our recruiting, funding and public support."

Altieri went on, "A reporter lecturing to one of my classes told us, 'The media is like a big, hungry dog. You can either choose to feed it or let it dig through your trash!' I'd rather work with the media than against them."

See **Top**, page 4

PAOs, help us capture CAP's

# Spirit of Volunteerism

The Marketing and Public Relations Directorate is developing a new national marketing campaign, and we need your help.

We want to build new PR materials around testimonials from real members who are out in the field doing the work that makes us all most proud of CAP.

We're looking for people who represent the average members of CAP, people with jobs and families and other responsibilities who contribute their valuable free time to public service through CAP-related activities.

We're looking for senior and cadet members, young and old – long-time and new members.

If you have a candidate in mind, prepare an entry with the following: A 1,000-word explanation of why that individual represents CAP's spirit of volun-

## What you can win

The official national headquarters **Spirit of Volunteerism Award from the Marketing and Public Relations Directorate.**

**A \$100 voucher for any merchandise from the CAP Bookstore.**

teerism, his/her contributions to CAP, information about that person's non-CAP life and complete contact information for the individual. PLUS, we must have a color photo of this individual "in action," performing his/her duties for CAP. If we choose your entry for national publication, you win! (See box above.)

You may enter as many times as you like. Be sure your entries reflect diversity in origin, location, background and gender.

Mail entries to:

Spirit of Volunteerism Award  
Melanie LeMay, PR Specialist  
Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters  
105 South Hansell St., Building 714  
Maxwell AFB, Ala. 36112-6332

Just released:

## CAP Anniversary Guide

Revised and updated



If you're planning a CAP anniversary celebration or open house at any time in the future, you'll be glad to know the *CAP Anniversary Guide*, newly revised and updated, gives step-by-step instructions for handling media coverage. The guide includes tips for

courting the media, writing press releases and proclamations, and using an anniversary celebration for recruiting.

To get your new anniversary guide, send a request by email to Robin Hunt at rhunt@capnhq.gov.

## Rank writing

As of Dec. 1, CAP's two top chiefs will assume new ranks, having been promoted by USAF Chief of Staff John Jumper.



Bowling

Brig. Gen. Richard L. Bowling will assume the rank of major general while Col. Dwight Wheless will assume the rank of brigadier general.



Wheless

As with all military ranks, there is a difference in the style used for military documents as opposed to that used for public consumption (newspapers, magazines, etc.) General publications generally follow Associated Press (AP) style, in which ranks are always capped, abbreviated and followed by periods. When listing a CAP member by rank, always add a comma and "CAP" after the name to designate the rank as a CAP rank. As an example, our commanders' names with their new titles, in AP style, will be: *Maj. Gen. Richard L. Bowling, CAP*, and *Brig. Gen. Dwight Wheless, CAP*.

If you're in doubt about proper style for a member's rank, you can consult the *AP Stylebook* (look under "military titles"). However, the abbreviations you'll use most often are: Gen., Lt. Gen., Maj. Gen., Brig. Gen., Col., Lt. Col., Maj., Capt., 1st Lt. and 2nd Lt. CAP cadets have the word "Cadet," capitalized, placed in front of their titles.

## Cool Web sites for writers

### The Band-aid Stylebook

This stylebook is a summary of the most commonly used items in the *Associated Press Stylebook*. It's no substitute for the real thing, but it's a good quick reference. [www.missouri.edu/~jschool/missourian/style](http://www.missouri.edu/~jschool/missourian/style)

### The Writer magazine

The Web site for this magazine offers interviews with professional writers, reviews of the latest books on writing, articles on how other writers work productively, ethical considerations in writing and points of syntax. [www.writermag.com](http://www.writermag.com)

### Online writing workshops

Take a writing course on your own time, at your own pace, with online workshops sponsored by the venerable *Writer's Digest*. [www.writersonlineworkshops.com](http://www.writersonlineworkshops.com)

## LATEST CAP STATS

### CAP Membership as of 31 October 2002

Notable:

◆ CAP membership now has increased every consecutive month for a full year.

◆ Almost twice as many new members (3,282) signed up in October as in a typical single month.

Total membership:	62,384
Cadets:	26,915
Seniors:	35,469

### Need CAP data?

For the **CAP Fact Sheet** (always have a copy handy for media) go online at [www.capnhq.gov](http://www.capnhq.gov), click on "News and Issues" on the home page, then on "Inside CAP." Scroll down to "Tools for PAOs."

Under e-services "CAP Publications," you can print your own copies of the following:

- ☐ **CAP and CAP-USAF Phone Book** (up-to-date direct phone numbers and titles for all NHQ staff)
- ☐ **CAP Pamphlets 190-1 and 190-2** (the bible for PAOs); and
- ☐ **CAP 201, PAO Specialty Track Study Guide.**

## Captive audience?

# Try on-screen advertising

**Melanie LeMay**

*Public Relations Specialist*

When Michigan Wing PAO Jim Siciliano saw a chance to promote CAP to a captive audience, he couldn't pass it up. He worked with a company called Cinema Advertising to insert CAP promotional slides amongst the trailers at local movie theaters.

Siciliano persuaded the company to donate eight weeks of public service advertising to the Phoenix Cadet Flight Squadron to support



recruiting. Cinema Advertising agreed to run the PSA several times before each movie showing at the Star Taylor and Star Lincoln Park theaters, both of which are in the squadron's geographic area. The only charge to CAP was the cost of

slide duplication, which was about \$190.

This particular company provided an online template to help Siciliano create the slide.

The company asked that Siciliano use only a dark background with light type colors, and refrain from using the color red for type since it tends to bleed into the background of the image on a theater screen. They specified that the fonts be bold and thick, and that the words be set in upper and lowercase.

They were able to use only certain kinds of art, including original photos, advertising slicks, chrome or negatives, electronic files at 300 dpi or more, and camera-ready art. They were not able to use newspaper clippings, business cards or letterhead, images from Web sites, photocopies or computer-generated printouts.

The company was amenable to using Photoshop jpeg or tif files or Illustrator files with .ai or .eps extensions. All art had to be in RGB color mode, and Siciliano had to supply all the art and all the fonts used in his slide on an accompanying disk.

The company specified that any photos made with a digital camera had to have a pixel count of at least 900 x 600.

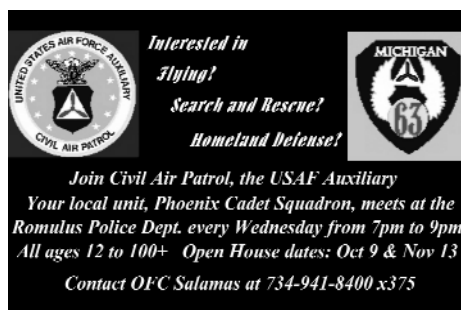
"I'm viewing this as a test," Siciliano said. "If the Phoenix Cadet Flight has success with this, perhaps we can repeat it in other areas of the state."

National Headquarters PA is discussing plans to create some generic slides, downloadable from our Web site, for such uses.

*Do you have good ideas for PAOs? Send them to Melanie LeMay at [mlemay@capnhq.gov](mailto:mlemay@capnhq.gov)*

At right is Michigan Wing's experimental PSA theater slide. This wing PAO created the slide with a template supplied by the advertising company.

Slide courtesy of Jim Siciliano



## Writing POWERFUL headlines

Headline writing is an art. In fact, state press associations give special awards just for that handful of writers and editors who demonstrate the talent.

According to David Murray, editor of Ragan Communications' Journal of Employee Communication Management, a good headline fulfills three purposes. First, it notifies people who would normally read the story that this is right up their alley.

Second, it grabs people who are on the fence - only marginally interested in the subject - and gets them at least to read the lead paragraph.

Third, and perhaps most important, the headline lets those who haven't the faintest interest in the subject know that this story isn't for them.

Murray points out, and rightly so, that people these days are too busy to read every word in every publication they pick

up. As a headline writer, think of yourself as the air traffic controller for readers. Help them get where they want to go by telling them clearly which stories will give them the information they need.

In a perfect world, all headlines would be both clear and clever. When push comes to shove, however, abandon cleverness in favor of clarity.

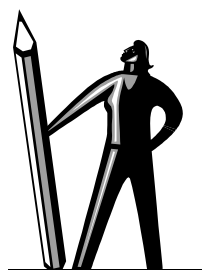
When you write a press release, include a headline. Know that the publication may not use your headline, but include it anyway. Since good headlines are so hard to write, the editors and reporters who read your release will appreciate your effort.

Know that most headlines ultimately are written by copy

editors and sometimes by page designers. When they finally lay out the publication and assign a spot to your story, its position on the page and the number of columns allotted to it will dictate the size and length of its headline.

In general, those articles closer to the top of the page will get larger headlines, since most publications give the feature story top billing and gradually reduce the size of the other headlines as the reader moves further down the page. Besides watching the font size for the headlines, the page designer also has to fit the headline above the width of the story. You can see why the designer so often must cut, add to or totally rewrite the headline just to make it fit.

Look at the publication you're writing for and see if the headlines are written in title style, with every major word capitalized. If



# Perfect fit

**The editor of *Civil Air Patrol News* insists on getting it right, whether it's a publication or a high-powered lifestyle.**

There aren't many people in the world who can say their career choice was a "perfect fit." But those are the words *Civil Air Patrol News* Editor-in-Chief Jim Tynan uses to describe his career as a public affairs officer.

"When I was an Air Force ROTC cadet attending the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I submitted my Air Force dream sheet asking for the PAO career field. I was majoring in communications with a focus in journalism, and figured it would be a perfect fit for me," he said. "As it turned out, after spending 13-plus years as a USAF PAO, I'm happy to report it turned out to be just that — a perfect fit."

After retiring as an Air Force

major, Tynan took the position of *CAP News* editor over seven years ago. He has found it to be a rewarding second career.

"The CAP volunteers are the most dedicated, committed and giving people I have ever met during my half century on this earth."

Tynan is not only pursuing a second career, but a new lifestyle as well. "I'm happy to report I got married this year to CAP's marketing and publications coordinator, Linda Andrews (now Tynan)," he said. "She's a wonderful lady who has helped me realize how truly blessed I am in this life."

When he's not spending time with his new wife and two grown sons, Tynan is dedicated to life

in the great outdoors, camping, horseback riding and sea and whitewater kayaking. And though he's crafted a satisfying life for himself, he still has major goals ahead.

"As a sea kayaker, I'd like to take some British Canoe Union 5-star training at the Anglesey (England) Sea and Surf Centre," he said.

"Not only do you get the chance to learn sea kayaking from some of the greats, but you get to do it in some of the most challenging ocean waters in the world."



Photos courtesy of Linda Tynan



Top of page, Jim Tynan braves the waves in the Gulf of Mexico, July 2002. Editing *CAP News* is like riding the rapids, he says, with periods of rough water interspersed with moments of calm, like that in the photo above, shot on the Alabama River in Sept. 2001.

**Next month: The PAOs' friend, Melanie LeMay**

## Top, continued from page 1

Altieri says PAOs must demonstrate to both CAP and USAF liaison officers the benefits of working with the media. "A PAO is an important staff officer," Altieri said. "No Army commander I know would deploy on an operation without taking his PAO and legal officer with him. CAP commanders need to adopt the same policy."

It's the PAO's responsibility to show the commander the benefits of taking such a stance, Altieri stressed. "If you as a PAO are not on the phone every day with your commander and local media reps, you're going to get caught with your pants down when the phone rings at 0300 Labor Day morning and a reporter from Channel 8 News wants to know the details of a CAP plane crash in your wing."

Altieri won national recognition from CAP, in part, because his PA program in Kentucky was one of the first to provide information to the media in the aftermath of the 9-11 attacks. "My Army and CAP backgrounds gave me good insight into what missions CAP

was going to provide," he said. "I had already established a close working relationship with the regional news outlets. The media were scrambling for news stories that related the attacks to area citizens." Because they knew and trusted Altieri, the media turned to him for information. "Their coverage gave us a chance to show what we could do for the country."

Because he's changed locations during his Army career, Altieri has served CAP squadrons in several wings as well as overseas. He's been a squadron commander and has received awards for his work with cadets and in aerospace education.

Altieri says an important mission for a PAO is to train other PAOs. "This not only helps your wing or unit when you leave, but also is a primary source for news," he said. "You can't be everywhere at once."

"And finally, don't forget the cadets. They want to tell their story, and most are better writers and photographers than many of us senior members!"

## Headline, continued from page 3

your publication follows this style, then imitate it in your press release.

Keep your headline conversational. Write the way people speak. Avoid pretentious jargon, military acronyms and odd verbs. As the stylebook for The St. Petersburg Times warns, "Headlines should not read like telegrams."

Write in present tense, active voice. For example, use *Civil Air Patrol finds lost hiker*. Don't use *Civil Air Patrol found lost hiker* or *Lost hiker found by Civil Air Patrol*.

Above all, be sure the headline is accurate. Don't mislead your reader with a bait-and-switch like those enticing blurbs you too often see on magazine covers. Be sure your headline is easy to under-

stand and can't be misinterpreted.

Finally, be sure to spell every word correctly. A misspelled word looks bad enough in 12-point type. It fairly screams in a 60-point headline.

The next time you pick up a newspaper or magazine, notice those headlines that grab your attention and make you want to read the stories they herald. Analyze those headlines to understand why they work for you, and try to use what you learn when you write your next article or press release.

With practice, you'll find that headlines pop into your mind more easily as time goes on, and you'll be well on your way to mastering this elusive art.